



Town and Parish Councils Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

Produced by Business Intelligence
Warwickshire County Council
October 2025

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Executive summary

A survey was carried out to support the county council and borough and district councils in gaining a clearer understanding of the views of town and parish councils and parish meetings on local government reorganisation and devolution. Town and parish councils and parish meetings in Warwickshire were sent the survey to complete online via Microsoft forms during September 2025.

Town and parish councils/ meetings represented

There were 55 responses to the survey, with some councils submitting more than one response. In total, 49 town and parish councils or meetings were represented.

General awareness and understanding of local government reorganisation and devolution

How well informed do you feel about matters relating to Local Government Reorganisation?

- 40.0% (n=22) of respondents felt very well informed or informed, 54.5% (n=30) felt somewhat informed and 5.5% (n=3) felt poorly informed

How well informed do you feel about matters relating to Devolution?

- 29.7% (n=16) felt very well informed or informed, 46.3% (n=25) felt somewhat informed and 24% (n=13) felt poorly informed

Sources of information

Which sources of information have informed your understanding regarding Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution?

- Respondents were asked to select all options that applied. The most common options selected were:
 - 78.2% (n=44) selected "Borough or District Council"
 - 67.3% (n=37) selected "County Council"
 - 52.7% (n=29) selected "Warwickshire Association of Local Councils"

Are there any other information sharing avenues that you would like us to explore?

- 22 respondents answered this open question. Common themes were:
 - "Direct contact with parish councils" (40.9%, n=9)
 - "More information needed" (18.2%, n=4)

Opportunities and options – parishing areas that are currently not parished

Would your Council/Meeting support the idea of parishing those areas of Warwickshire that are currently non-parished (Nuneaton and Bedworth, and Rugby Town)

- 49.1% (n=27) would strongly support or support, 47.3% (n=26) would neither support nor oppose and 3.6% (n=2) would oppose. No respondents selected strongly oppose.
- The main themes of free text comments regarding parishing non-parished areas were:
 - Benefits of parishing – improved connection and engagement with local communities (n=13)
 - Non-parished areas need to decide (n=6)
 - Suggestion for areas to join with other parishes (n=4)
 - Need for more information (n=4)

Opportunities and options – the introduction of area committees and local community boards/ networks

Would your Council/Meeting support the (re)introduction of Area Committees

- 49.1% (n=27) would strongly support or support, 45.5% (n=25) would neither support nor oppose and 5.4% (n=3) would strongly oppose or oppose
- The main themes of free text comments regarding area committees were:
 - Need for more information/ clarity on area committees (n=18)
 - Importance of local representation (n=9)
 - Area committees would need a clear purpose and governance (n=7)
 - Proposed size of area committees is too large (n=5)

Would your Council/Meeting support the introduction of local Community Boards or Networks

- 47.3% (n=26) would strongly support or support, 45.5% (n=25) would neither support nor oppose and 7.2% (n=4) would strongly oppose or oppose.
- The main themes of free text comments regarding local community boards or networks were:
 - More information required (n=14)
 - Clear purpose and objectives needed (n=6)
 - Benefit of ensuring local representation (n=5)
 - Support for local community board or networks (n=5)

Opportunities and options- options for devolved functions and services

To what extent do you agree or disagree that having a list of options for devolved functions and services would add clarity regarding what functions and services are being referred to, and the circumstances in which they might be devolved

- 72.8% (n=40) strongly agreed or agreed, 18.2% (n=9) neither agreed nor disagreed and 9.1% (n=5) strongly disagreed or disagreed
- The main themes of free text comments regarding options for devolved functions and services were:
 - Beneficial for planning ahead (n=15)
 - Concerns about capacity and resources (n=8)
 - More information required (n=7)

Opportunities and challenges – Local Government Reorganisation

What does your Council/Parish Meeting perceive to be the key opportunities associated with Local Government Reorganisation and the potential devolution of services

- The main themes of free text comments regarding opportunities associated with LGR and devolution of services were:
 - No opportunities or benefits (n=12)
 - Financial benefits (n=9)
 - Improved response to local issues (n=8)
 - More information required/uncertainty (n=6)
 - Local engagement and decision making (n=6)

What does your Council/Parish Meeting perceive to be the key challenges/risks associated with Local Government Reorganisation and the potential devolution of services, acknowledging that financial considerations will always play a significant role

- The main themes of free text comments regarding challenges/risks associated with LGR and devolution of services were:
 - Financial challenges (n=20)
 - Concerns regarding capacity and resources of town and parish councils (n=19)
 - Loss of local representation (n=12)
 - Impact on volunteers and councillors (n=11)
 - Risks of not having a clear plan (n=6)
 - Further information required (n=6)

Background

A survey was carried to support the county council and borough and district councils in gaining a clearer understanding of the views of town and parish councils and parish meetings on local government reorganisation and devolution. The findings will help to understand the needs, opportunities and challenges faced by local councils and meetings in relation to proposed changes.

Method

An online survey was hosted on Microsoft Forms and a private link emailed to all town and parish councils and parish meetings. The survey ran from 29 August to 26 September 2025. A reminder email was sent on 10th September to councils/meetings who had not completed the survey.

Quantitative results have been analysed, and open text responses have been themed and are displayed in Tables 1 to 7.

Appendix 1 provides the survey questions.

Results

There were 55 responses to the survey, one was submitted via email on a copy of the survey. Fifty of the responses were from clerks on behalf of parish councils and parish meetings, five were responses providing the views of individuals. More than one response was received from four parish/ town councils (Brinklow, Curdworth, Kenilworth and Wolverton).

Town and parish councils/meetings represented

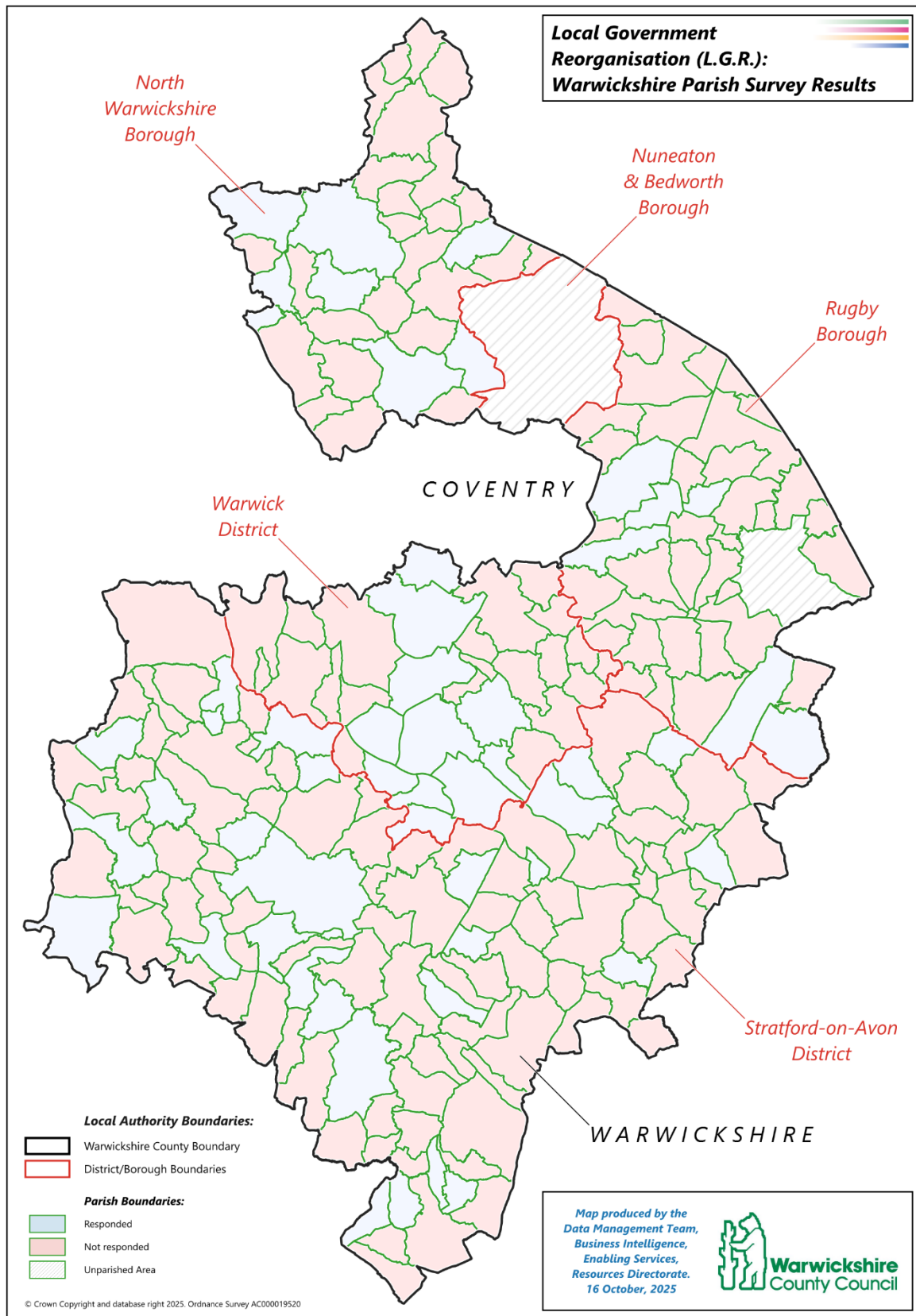
The first questions asked for names and email addresses, to collate who had responded to the survey. The next question asked respondents which town or parish council/meeting they were representing. Table 1 lists the councils represented and figure 1 shows a map of Warwickshire with the town and parish meeting/ councils that have been represented in survey responses.

Table 1: Town or parish meeting/ council represented in survey responses

Borough or District	Number of responses	Town or parish meeting/ council
North Warwickshire Borough	8	Astley Parish Council Curdworth Parish Council Fillongley Parish Council Kingsbury Parish Council Mancetter Parish Council Middleton Parish Council

		Nether Whitacre Parish Council Water Orton Parish Council
Rugby Borough	6	Brandon & Bretford Parish Council Brinklow Parish Council Combe Fields Parish Council Easenhall Parish Council Grandborough Parish Council Wolfhampcote Parish Council
Stratford-on-Avon District	26	Alcester Town Council Avon Dassett Parish Council Beaudesert and Henley in Arden Parish Council Cherington and Stourton Joint Parish Council Claverdon Parish Council Clifford Chambers & Milcote Parish Council Combroke Parish Council Great Alne Parish Council Harbury Parish Council Moreton Morrell Parish Council Pillerton Priors Parish Council Preston on Stour Parish Council Priors Hardwick Parish Council Salford Priors Parish Council Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council Stockton Parish Council Studley Parish Council Tanworth in Arden Residents Association The Wolfords Joint Parish Council Tredington Parish Council Ufton Parish Council Upper Lighthorne Parish Council Welford on Avon Parish Council Wilmcote Parish Council Wolverton Parish Council Whitchurch Parish Meeting
Warwick District	9	Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton Joint Parish Council Bishop's Tachbrook Parish Council Budbrooke Parish Council Burton Green Parish Council Kenilworth Town Council Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe Parish Council Royal Leamington Spa Town Council Warwick Town Council Whitnash Town Council

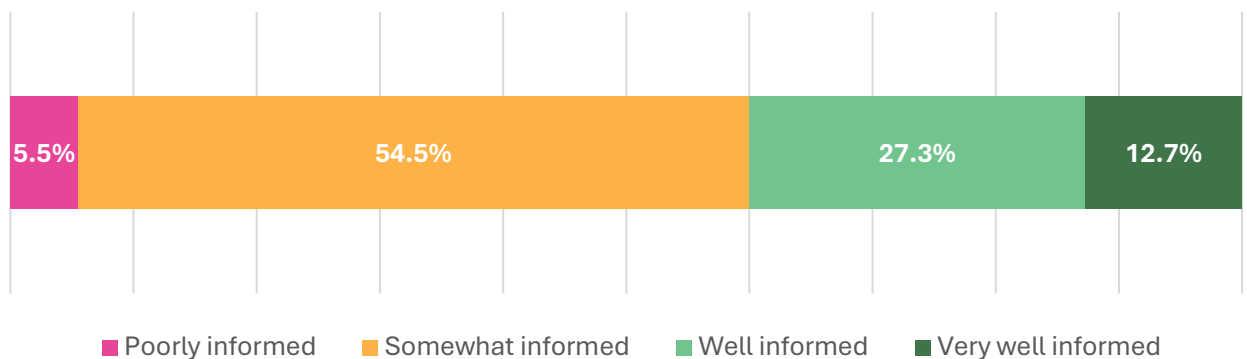
Figure 1: Town or parish meeting/ council represented in survey responses



General awareness and understanding of local government reorganisation and devolution

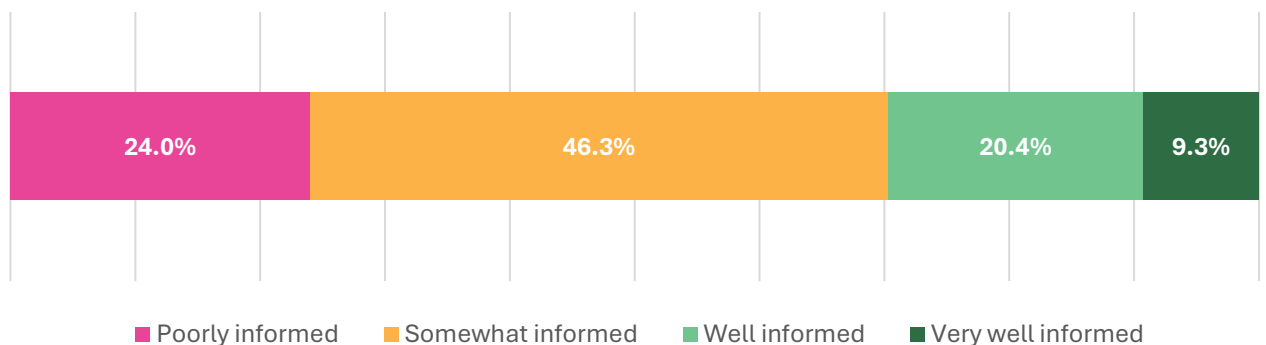
Respondents were asked how well informed they felt about local government reorganisation; all 55 respondents answered this question. As shown in Figure 2, 40% (n=22) advised very well informed or informed, 54.5% (n=30) advised somewhat informed and 5.5% (n=3) advised poorly informed.

Figure 2: Percentage responses to “How well informed do you feel about matters relating to Local Government Reorganisation?”



The next question asked respondents how well informed they felt about matters relating to devolution. A total of 98.2% (n=54) respondents answered this question. Figure 3 shows that 29.7% (n=16) indicated they felt very well informed or informed, 46.3% (n=25) felt somewhat informed and 24% (n=13) felt poorly informed.

Figure 3: Percentage responses to “How well informed do you feel about matters relating to Devolution?”



Sources of information

Respondents were asked which sources of information have informed their understanding, responses are shown in Figure 4. All 55 respondents answered the question, respondents were asked to select sources that they have used from a listed provided – they could also select “Other” and add other sources. Overall, 78.2% (n=43) of respondents selected “Borough or District Council”, 67.3% (n=37) selected “County Council”, and 52.7% (n=29) selected “Warwickshire Association of Local Councils”. Seven respondents selected “Other” – other sources included CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy), Government pages, District Councillor, discussion with officer at Stratford DC, legal opinions, BBC and social media.

Figure 4: Number of responses to “Which sources of information have informed your understanding regarding Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution?”

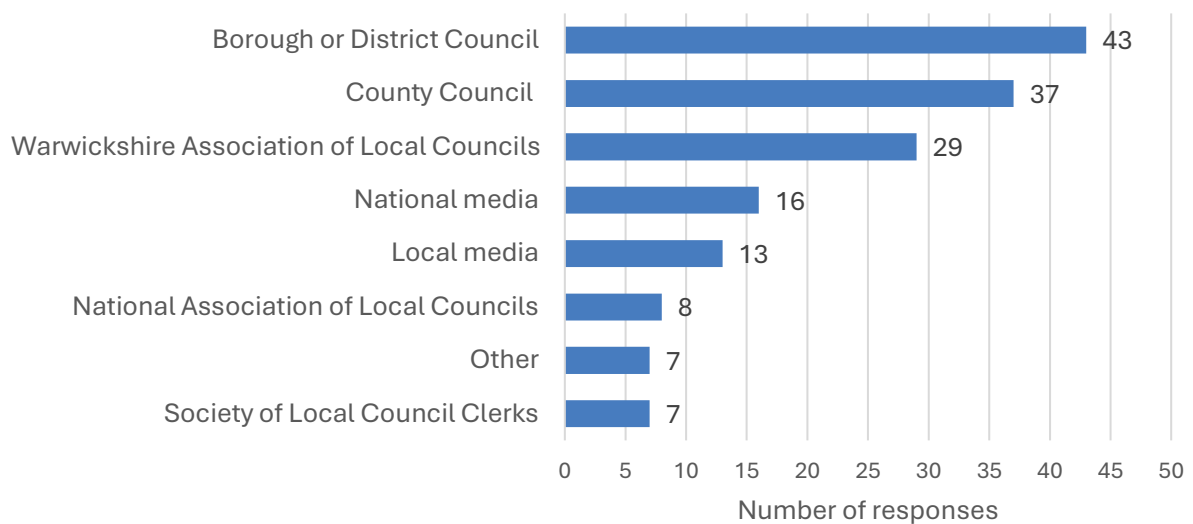


Table 2 shows the themes of responses to the following question “are there any other information sharing avenues you would like us to explore”. Twenty-two (40.7%) respondents answered this question. Overall, 40.9% (n=9) provided a comment related to the theme “direct contact with parish councils” and 18.2% (n=4) provided a comment related to “more information needed”.

Table 2: Themed responses to “Are there any other information sharing avenues that you would like us to explore?”

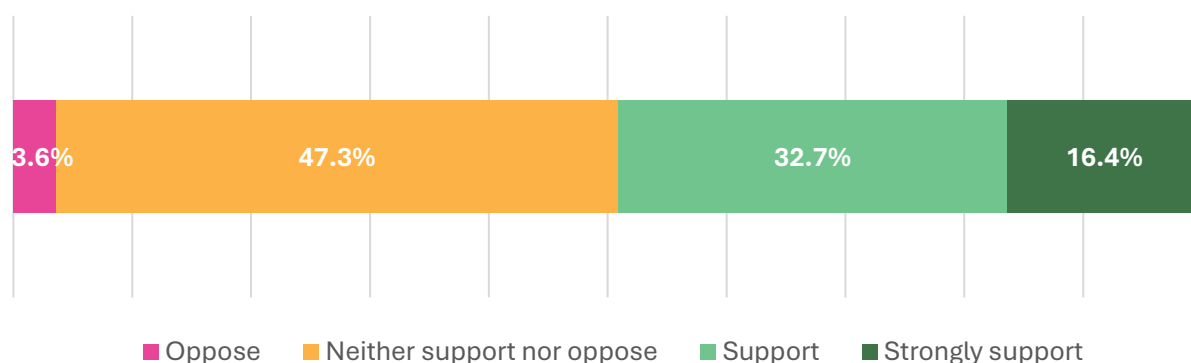
Theme	Number of responses	Responses
Direct contact with Parish Councils	9	“Come to parish councils and present your plans” “Regular newsletters, blogs, opted pieces from respected LGA leaders and more regular briefing calls”
More information needed	4	“Not until some decisions have been made and we understand what we need to work towards”
Social media	2	“Social media” “Online social media from authoritative sources”
Lesson learnt from other Councils	2	“Other recently created Unitary Authorities, to learn lessons”

Other information avenues mentioned by one respondent included: public meetings, CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy), direct email, central government and local news.

Opportunities and options – parishing areas that are currently non-parished

The next question asked if respondents would support the idea of parishing areas of Warwickshire that are currently non-parished (Nuneaton, Bedworth, and Rugby Town). All respondents answered the question. Figure 5 shows that 49.1% (n=27) of respondents would strongly support or support parishing non-parished areas, 47.3% (n=26) would neither support nor oppose and 3.6% (n=2) would oppose. No respondents selected strongly oppose as an option.

Figure 5: Percentage responses to “Would your Council/Meeting support the idea of parishing those areas of Warwickshire that are currently non-parished (Nuneaton, Bedworth, and Rugby Town)?”



Respondents were given the opportunity to further explain their thinking regarding parishing non-parished areas. Thirty-three responses were received; 39.4% (n=13) provided comments relating to a potential benefit of parishing being improved connection and engagement with local communities, 18.2% (n=6) provided comments suggesting that non-parished areas to need to make the decision on parishing, and 12.1% (n=4) provided comments suggesting joining of parishes/non-parishes.

Table 3: Themed responses to “Please use below space to expand on your thinking regarding parishing non-parished areas”

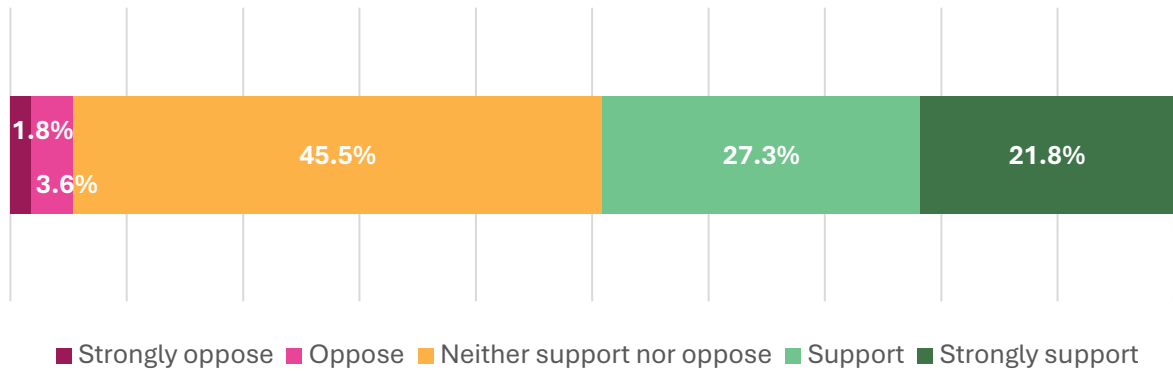
Theme	Number of responses	Example of responses
Benefit of parishing – improved connection and engagement with local communities	13	<p><i>“Parishing is all about effective local community engagement that is substantially non-political”</i></p> <p><i>“Opportunity for residents to contribute to service provision in their local area. Local interests need to be represented and protected”</i></p> <p><i>“Parish Councils are hyper-local, responsive to immediate needs and concerns. Councillors are also much more available to residents and issues can be dealt with quickly”</i></p>
Non-parished areas need to decide	6	<p><i>“Give the opportunity to the residents affected to understand the options, the responsibilities and question how the implementation might happen and be funded”</i></p> <p><i>“Would be an issue for local choice in those areas”</i></p>
Suggestion for areas to join with other parishes	4	<p><i>“It may be advantageous for non parished communities to join with neighbouring parishes for community benefit and support”</i></p>
Need more information	4	<p><i>“Difficult to understand the issues until we have an understanding of the way forward”</i></p> <p><i>“I’m uncommitted as I’d like to understand on its implications/benefits.”</i></p>
Considerations/practicalities of becoming a parished council	3	<p><i>“Functions must be identified and advice from informed sources e.g. Arnold Baker and WALC should be followed”</i></p> <p><i>“Would suggest good justification is needed to warrant effort/costs to make the change”</i></p>
Support all areas having a parish council/ ensures consistent approach	3	<p><i>“All areas should have Parish Councils or Town Councils to provide local level information, support and decision-making”</i></p> <p><i>“This would provide a consistent approach in respect of the services delivered by existing parish councils and would help give more localized voice and views”</i></p>

Unsure	2	<i>"Unclear on impact"</i>
Financial considerations	2	<i>"Appropriate finance must be provided from within existing budgets and there should be no additional impact on the Council Tax levy"</i>
Difficulty recruiting to parish councils	2	<i>"It is difficult to find Parish councillors, I wouldn't want to impose that task on to another area"</i>

Opportunities and options – the (re) introduction of Area Committees

The (re)introduction of Area Committees, delegating some powers and possibly budgets to these committees, is being considered. Respondents were asked, "Accepting that much will depend on the detail of exactly what powers and level of budget might be delegated, would your town or parish Council/Meeting support the (re)introduction of Area Committees in principle?". Figure 6 shows that half of respondents, 49.1% (n=27) strongly support or support the re-introduction of Area Committees, 45.5% (n=25) would neither support nor oppose and 5.4% (n=3) would strongly oppose or oppose. All 55 respondents answered this question.

Figure 6: Percentage of responses to "Accepting that much will depend on the detail of exactly what powers and level of budget might be delegated, would your Council/Meeting support the (re)introduction of Area Committees in principle?"



Respondents were provided with a free text box to share their thoughts about the (re)introduction of Area Committees. The responses have been themed and are shown in Table 4. A total of 67.3% (n=37) respondents answered this question. Almost half 48.6% (n=18) provided a comment relating to needing more information; 24.3% (n=9) provided a comment relating to importance of local representation; and 18.9% (n=7) provided a comment relating to Areas Committees needing to have a clear purpose and governance.

Table 4: Themed responses to “Please use the below space to expand on your thinking regarding (re)introduction of Area Committees”

Theme	Number of responses	Example of responses
Need for more information/ clarity on Area committees	18	<p><i>“Without any information on what powers would be delegated, or what the budget levels associated with these delegated responsibilities may be, it is impossible to debate this possibility, and as such impossible to endorse or otherwise this principle”</i></p> <p><i>“We need more details on this before deciding whether to support this or not.”</i></p> <p><i>“The overall perceived benefit of Area Committees must be defined”</i></p>
Importance of local representation	9	<p><i>“Local voice and view will be very important”</i></p> <p><i>“This will enable local feedback for local issues”</i></p> <p><i>“It is always best when decisions can be made locally”</i></p>
Area Committees would need a clear purpose and governance	7	<p><i>“The powers, accountability and reporting lines need to be made clear, otherwise the Area Committees could be simply a talking shop”</i></p> <p><i>“An Area Committee will need to have clear functions, delegated authority and budget specifically relating to the Area in question”</i></p>
Proposed size of Area Committees is too large	5	<p><i>“The recommended size is too large to deliver localism, and the name does need to be reconsidered to avoid comparison with historical area committees”</i></p> <p><i>“The danger is that the area would be dominated by others who might not share our values and priorities”</i></p>
Support for Area committees	4	<p><i>“Sound like a good idea to make sure grassroots democracy and real connection to local needs and issues”</i></p> <p><i>“Having a body with more local oversight would be beneficial for us”</i></p>
LGR model comment	3	<p><i>“Would not want a single unitary council”</i></p>
Financial considerations needed	2	<p><i>“The method and source of funding must be identified before a decision can be taken”</i></p>
Capacity to operate	2	<p><i>“Capacity would need to be clearly stipulated to make sure that they match resources and available funding”</i></p>
Clarification on survey question and	1	<p><i>“Having attended the Town and Parish Council LGR Working Group on 17th September, we now understand that the Area Committees referred to are intended to cover</i></p>

information provided		<p><i>150,000 to 250,000 residents. We also understand that members of the Committee will be drawn from elected Unitary Councillors for the particular Area.)</i></p> <p><i>With respect, this was not clear from the survey question and therefore the answers you have received should be assessed accordingly. The term "Area Committee" has been used in the past for various council groupings, and we are not sure that every respondent to this survey will have appreciated what is proposed."</i></p>
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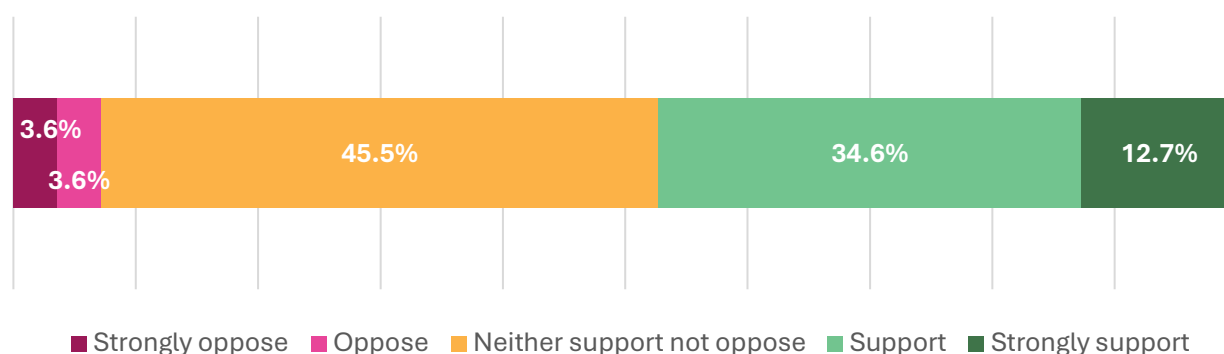
Themed responses provided by one respondent included: treat all partners equally.

Opportunities and options – the introduction of local Community Boards or Networks

Respondents were advised that the introduction of local Community Boards or Networks, is being considered, providing an opportunity for identification, discussion, and escalation of locally important priorities, a vehicle for information flow between the new unitary Council(s) and other partners such as the Police and Health. Potentially, existing partnerships and associations could fulfil the role of local Community Boards and Networks.

Respondents were asked if they would support the introduction of local community boards or networks, all 55 respondents answered the question. A total of 47.3% (n=26) would strongly support or support local community boards or networks, 45.5% (n=25) would neither support nor oppose and 7.2% (n=4) would strongly oppose or oppose. Responses are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Percentage of responses to “Would your Council/Meeting support the introduction of local Community Boards or Networks”



Respondents were asked to expand on their thinking regarding the introduction of local community boards or networks. Comments were received from 61.8% (n=34) of respondents, these have been themed and are shown in Table 5. Overall, of those who responded, 38.2% (n=14) made a comment relating to more information being required, 17.6% (n=6) made a comment relating to requiring a clear purpose and objectives, and 14.7% (n=5) provided comments advising of the benefit of ensuring there was local representation.

Table 5: Themed responses to “Please use below space to expand on your thinking regarding the introduction of local Community Boards or Networks”

Theme	Number of responses	Example of responses
More information required	14	<p><i>“We need more details on this before deciding whether to support this or not.”</i></p> <p><i>“I don’t know enough about what these committees would be expected to do and how they would work with existing/proposed statutory bodies”</i></p> <p><i>“I do not understand what these will consist of”</i></p>
Clear purpose and objectives needed	6	<p><i>“Depends on operational arrangements and terms of agreement”</i></p> <p><i>“As long as it works efficiently and it's not just a meeting where people share updates that could have been given in an email”</i></p> <p><i>“There must be a clear role for the Community Board with functions and proper resource from officers otherwise these will become “talking shops”. It would certainly be possible for the Community Board to have delegated functions and a budget.”</i></p>
Benefit of ensuring local representation	5	<p><i>“If the District Council, no longer exists then it is essential that there is respected representation to voice local concerns and issues”</i></p> <p><i>“Sharing local issues would be key”</i></p>
Support for local community boards or networks	5	<p><i>“In principle, we can see the benefits of this structure working in a particular way</i></p> <p><i>“Will enhance effective scrutiny and finances”</i></p> <p><i>“Having a body with more local oversight would be beneficial for us”</i></p>
Oppose local community boards or networks	4	<p><i>“System needs simplification and democratisation - not more complexity”</i></p> <p><i>“This is parish council's responsibility - whether they do it or not is a different matter”</i></p>
Difference clarified between area committees and local boards/ networks	3	<p><i>“Why would we have both Area Committees and Local Board or Networks?”</i></p> <p><i>“The difference between Area Committees and Local Community Boards or Networks needs to be clearly defined before any decisions are made on their suitability”</i></p>
LGR model comments	3	<p><i>“We will have a better idea on the tasks ahead once the new Unitary Councils have been formed”</i></p>

Collaborative working	3	<i>“The current partnership arrangements in place between district councils and partners work well and should be maintained in the new system”</i>
Capacity of parish council	2	<i>“Parish Councils are volunteer led organisations often secondary to other commitments. Therefore, capacity needs to be considered with devolved activities and is essential to ensure they can be managed at Parish level.”</i>

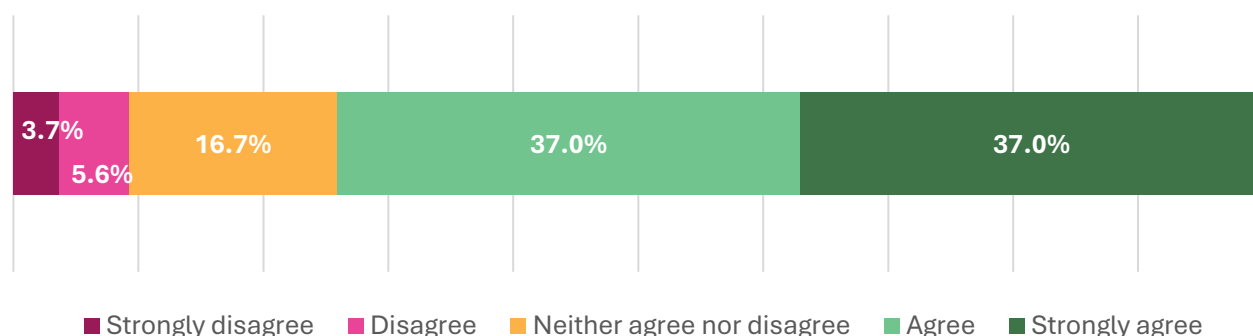
Themes mentioned by one respondent included: “discussion is not action”.

Opportunities and options – options for devolved functions and services

The creation of options for devolved functions and services, including possible transfer of assets, is being explored. This approach recognises that local councils have varying circumstances, capacities, and appetite in taking on additional responsibilities. A clearly defined list of options would help clarify which functions and services are being considered for devolution, and under what conditions they might be devolved.

Respondents were asked if they would agree or disagree with having a list of options. Overall, 72.8% (n=40) of respondents strongly agreed or agreed, 18.2% (n=10) neither agreed nor disagreed and 9.1% (n=5) strongly disagreed or disagreed. The results are shown in Figure 8 below, all 55 respondents answered this question.

Figure 8: Responses to “To what extent do you agree or disagree that having a list of options for devolved functions and services would add clarity regarding what functions and services are being referred to, and the circumstances in which they might be devolved?”



Respondents were given the opportunity to add any comments regarding their thinking whether a list of options for devolved functions and services would be beneficial or not. All responses have been themed and are shown below in Table 6. Over half of respondents (58.2%, n=32) provided a comment; 46.9% (n=15) of these suggested a list would be beneficial particularly for planning ahead, whilst 25.0% (n=8) of comments raised concerns about capacity and resources required to support devolved functions and 21.9% (n=7) indicated that “more information” was needed.

Table 6: themed responses to “Please use below space to add any comments regarding your thinking around whether a list of options for devolved functions and services would be beneficial or not”

Theme	Number of responses	Example of responses
Beneficial for planning ahead	15	<p><i>“This list of options is essential so that parishes can have the maximum time to consider their options”</i></p> <p><i>“This is an essential piece of the jigsaw for parish and town councils as it will provide clarity and an understanding of the scope and scale of what functions and services they may be required to take on. This information should be provided as soon as possible to enable maximum time for parishes to consider their position”</i></p>
Concerns about capacity and resources	8	<p><i>“It needs to be considered that Councillors are volunteers who put themselves forward to carry out tasks on behalf of the Parish. They are probably not skilled in the areas which may become devolved and do not wish to take on the additional responsibilities. Please remember we are all volunteers”</i></p> <p><i>“When community assets and services are devolved, financial support particularly for ongoing costs are not properly considered”</i></p>
More information required	7	<p><i>“We do not have enough information to form the basis of an answer or make an informed decision”</i></p> <p><i>“Clarification needed”</i></p>
Control over local assets	3	<i>“Residents should have local assets retained for them”</i>
Questions on practicalities of devolved services	2	<i>“Depends on operational arrangements and terms”</i>

Responses provided by one included: “council and district to lead”, “equality”, “lack of powers to complete the questions” and “not beneficial”.

Opportunities and challenges – Local Government Reorganisation

Respondents were asked “What does your Council/Parish Meeting perceive to be the key opportunities associated with Local Government Reorganisation and the potential devolution of services?”. The responses have been themed and are shown below in Table 7. All 55 respondents provided an answer to this question. Overall, 21.8% (n=12) provided comments suggesting there are no opportunities or benefits, financial benefits were mentioned by 16.4% (n=9) and 14.6% (n=8) provided comments suggesting opportunities to have an improved responses to local issues.

Table 7: Responses to “What does your Council/Parish Meeting perceive to be the key opportunities associated with Local Government Reorganisation and the potential devolution of services?”

Theme	Number of responses	Example of responses
No opportunities or benefits	12	<p><i>“Almost none, bigger is usually worse. However, it would be better than the current split of responsibilities”</i></p> <p><i>“Can’t see any”</i></p> <p><i>“Clearly concerned for the future, not certain bigger is better and devolved services are unwelcome”</i></p>
Financial benefits	9	<p><i>“Cost saving and more direct contact with those who spend most of the budget”</i></p> <p><i>“Cutting waste and ensuring money goes back into the local community”</i></p>
Improved response to local issues	8	<p><i>“Reduction in the time and layers of decision making involved in those matters that we often seem not to be involved in or have a voice”</i></p> <p><i>“Opportunity to give Parish councils more of a voice to raise issues and influence how they are prioritised”</i></p> <p><i>“Better two way understanding and communication between the tiers of local government”</i></p>
More information required/ not sure	6	<p><i>“We have not been given sufficient information”</i></p> <p><i>“We don’t know as we have not been told what might be devolved to us”</i></p>
Local engagement and decision making	6	<p><i>“Decisions made closer to the people who consume services”</i></p> <p><i>“Local connections “</i></p> <p><i>“Opportunities to get more local decision making Locally managed, responsive to local need, finger on the pulse of what residents’ value and appreciate being delivered”</i></p>
Improved clarity of roles and responsibilities	5	<p><i>“Clarity as to who the service provider ought to be as there will only be one council, the Unitary Authority, above the parish councils.”</i></p> <p><i>“Clearer lines of responsibility for services, and no passing of the buck between county and district. Residents may find it easier to deal with one level of authority if they are not sure whether a specific service is provided by the District or County”</i></p>
Questions and concerns on LGR	5	<p><i>“The big picture Vision for the proposed structure needs to be clearly stated”</i></p> <p><i>“That any changes must not result in additional financial burdens”</i></p>

Views on proposed LGR models	4	<i>"Should have proposed a unitary, not binary organisation, so weakening the opportunities for better"</i>
Concerns regarding capacity and resources of town and parish councils	3	<i>"Parish Councils are made up of volunteers, many who are in full time employment. Asking Parish Councils to do more will fail due to lack of resource and money PCs are the lowest form of government these ideas need to come from the top down and please remember we are all elected and not paid. We are not working alongside specialist paid employees who can advise us unlike District and County Councillors."</i>
Opportunities for local management	3	<i>"If local parish councils are given authority to make decisions without them having to continually report to higher tiers of authority"</i>

Themes mentioned by one respondent include: reduction in council tax, reorganisation of boundaries.

The final question asked respondents to highlight their thoughts on key challenges and risks associated with local government reorganisation and devolution, responses have been themed and are shown in Table 8. All 55 respondents provided an answer for this question. A total of 36.4% (n=20) provided comments relating to financial challenges, 34.5% (n=19) provide comments relating to concerns regarding capacity and resources of town and parish councils, and 21.8% (n=12) commented on potential loss of local representation.

Table 8: themes responses to "What does your Council/Parish Meeting perceive to be the key challenges/risks associated with Local Government Reorganisation and the potential devolution of services, acknowledging that financial considerations will always play a significant role?"

Theme	Number of responses	Example of responses
Financial challenges	20	<i>"Financial uncertainty may arise from transitional costs and changes to funding structures"</i> <i>"Need answers relating to costs of devolution of services to parish councils"</i> <i>"The parish council doubts whether there will be any significant savings"</i> <i>"The key challenge will be financial, as we have a small precept so only few resources to take on any services that will not be a priority for a new authority."</i> <i>"there's a risk that financial resources will flow continuously in one direction"</i>
Concerns regarding capacity and resources of	19	<i>"Many smaller parishes have a limited number of councillors and part time Clerk, and may lack the</i>

town and parish councils		<p><i>manpower, experience, skills and competencies to deliver for their residents”</i></p> <p><i>“We are anticipating having roles that County are not interested in, being devolved to us and it will increase our workload”</i></p> <p><i>“Parish Councils will need to be administered effectively to ensure that they can cope with additional duties, and this will require. Where do we get the organisational manpower from?”</i></p>
Loss of local representation	12	<p><i>“The further you get away from understanding a specific community and its needs, the poorer will be delivering those needs”</i></p> <p><i>“We are concerned about the potential democratic deficit”</i></p> <p><i>“There is a risk that smaller parish requirements are overlooked or not met.”</i></p>
Impact on volunteers and councillors	11	<p><i>“Risk – Councillors leave”</i></p> <p><i>“Potential of over-burdening volunteer Councillors”</i></p> <p><i>“More work and responsibility for volunteers who do not have the experience to deal with potential devolution of services”</i></p> <p><i>“Risk of resignation of Clerk”</i></p>
Risks of not having a clear plan	6	<p><i>“Having a robust plan, and the strength of purpose, to make the proposed new organisation happen”</i></p> <p><i>“Ensuring equitable service provision will be essential but probably difficult”</i></p>
Further information required	6	<p><i>“Taking on new and/or expanded responsibilities without knowing the scope, the cost, whether we inherit funds and/or staff”</i></p> <p><i>“There is no guidance on parish council's precepting powers under these proposals”</i></p>
Service disruption	5	<p><i>“Service disruption is a risk during implementation, potentially affecting public confidence”</i></p>
Clarity of roles and responsibilities	4	<p><i>“Smaller parishes may require fundamental changes to their approach/organisation/purpose to fulfil significantly increased requirements under some of the changes being discussed/proposed.”</i></p>
Ensure consult with all and work together	4	<p><i>“Parish councils will need support from the unitary authority to follow best practice and to develop structures to be able to take on this enlarged role”</i></p> <p><i>“Challenge of creating meaningful, equal partnerships”</i></p>
Views on proposed LGR models	2	<p><i>“We already have issues relating to the fact that we sit on the four shires boundary (of Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire), which leads to a lack of coordination between services - i.e. highways, policing etc. We feel that the creation of a unitary council would exacerbate this situation”</i></p>

Themed responses by one respondent include: political opinion, make it happen, role of parish council maintained, ensure roles carried out correctly, support required, potential for resistance to change, legal issues around contracts, risk that small populations will be outvoted, potential of financial benefits and efficiencies are not produced.

Appendix 1 – copy of survey

Copy of survey (the text and space available to comment was much larger on the survey but for the purpose of this report has been reduced):

Which town or parish council/ parish meeting are you representing?

How well informed do you feel about matters relating to the Local Government Reorganisation?

- Very well informed
- Well informed
- Somewhat informed
- Poorly informed

How well informed do you feel about matters relating to Devolution?

- Very well informed
- Well informed
- Somewhat informed
- Poorly informed

Which sources of information have informed your understanding regarding Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution?

- Borough or District Council
- County Council
- Warwickshire Association of Local Councils
- National Association of Local Council Clerks
- Local media
- National media
- Other

Are there any other information sharing avenues that you would like us to explore?

Would your Council/Meeting support the idea of parishing those areas of Warwickshire that are currently non-parished (Nuneaton, Bedworth, and Rugby Town)?

- Strongly support
- Support

- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Please use below space to expand on your thinking regarding parishing non-parished areas.

The (re)introduction of Area Committees, delegating some powers and possibly budgets to these Committees, is being considered.

Accepting that much will depend on the detail of exactly what powers and level of budget might be delegated, would your Council/Meeting support the (re)introduction of Area Committees in principle?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Optional:

Please use the below space to expand on your thinking regarding (re)introduction of Area Committees.

The introduction of local Community Boards or Networks, is being considered, providing an opportunity for identification, discussion, and escalation of locally important priorities, a vehicle for information flow between the new unitary Council(s) and other partners such as the Police and Health. Potentially, existing partnerships and associations could fulfil the role of local Community Boards and Networks.

Would your Council/Meeting support the introduction of local Community Boards or Networks?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Optional:

Please use below space to expand on your thinking regarding the introduction of local Community Boards or Networks

The creation of options for devolved functions and services, including possible transfer of assets, is being explored. This approach recognises that local councils have varying circumstances, capacities, and appetite in taking on additional responsibilities. A clearly defined list of options would help clarify which functions and services are being considered for devolution, and under what conditions they might be devolved.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that having a list of options for devolved functions and services would add clarity regarding what functions and services are being referred to, and the circumstances in which they might be devolved?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Optional:

Please use below space to add any comments regarding your thinking around whether a list of options for devolved functions and services would be beneficial or not

What does your Council/Parish Meeting perceive to be the key opportunities associated with Local Government Reorganisation and the potential devolution of services?

What does your Council/Parish Meeting perceive to be the key challenges/risks associated with Local Government Reorganisation and the potential devolution of services, acknowledging that financial considerations will always play a significant role?